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DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

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Town of Los Gatos, California

Adopted by Planning Commission: February 22, 1982
Resolution No: 82-2

Adopted by Town Council: MAY 18, 1982
Resolution No: 1982-101

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	i
SECTION I Non-Conforming Status.	I-1
SECTION II Land Use	II-1
SECTION III Housing	III-1
SECTION IV Parking	IV-1
SECTION V Circulation and Transportation	V-1
SECTION VI Community Design	VI-1
SECTION VII Infrastructure and Utilities	VII-1

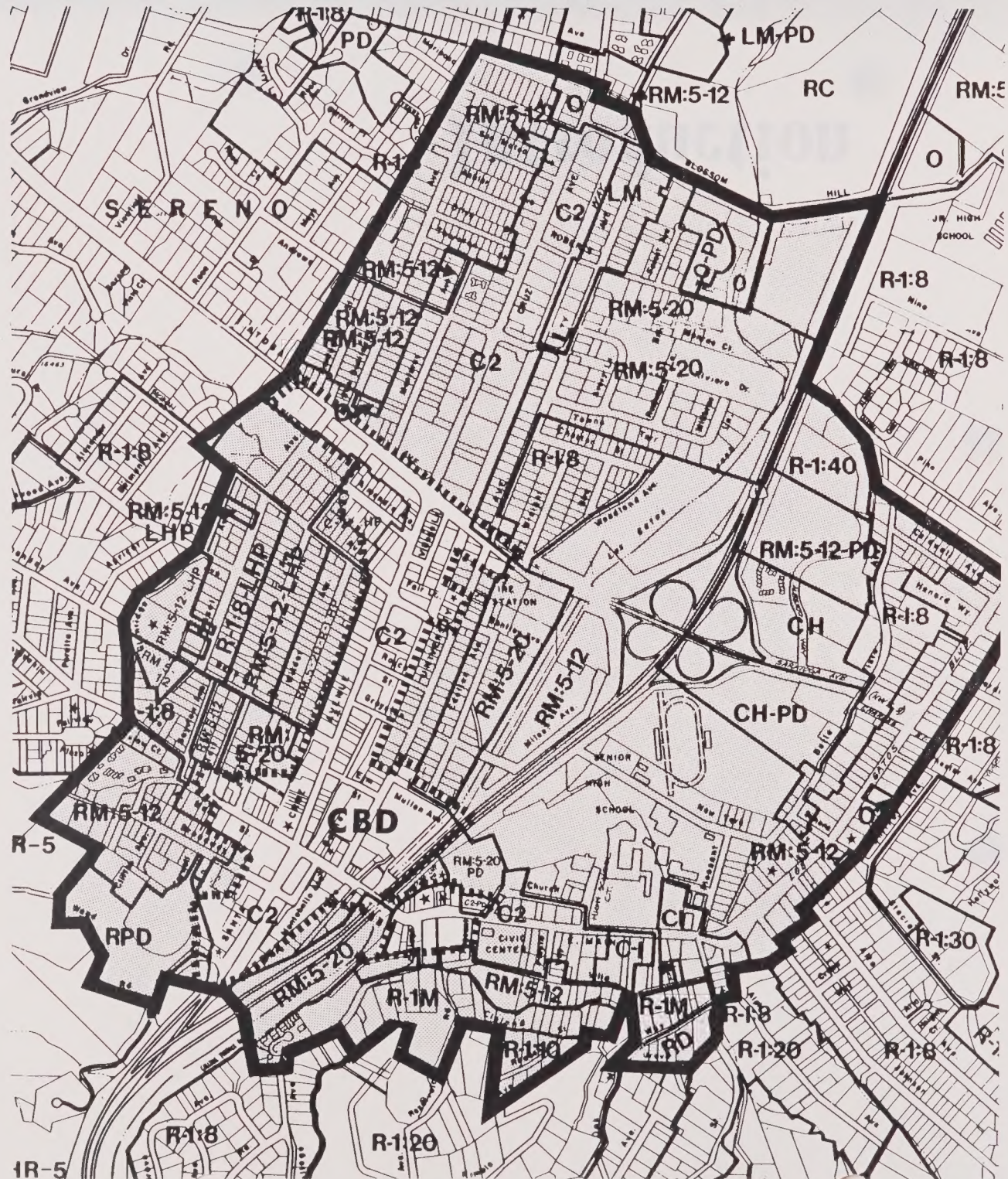
Materials dealing with the work of the Town Advisory Committee and Planning Consultants which led to the development of this Plan are contained in a separate document. Copies may be examined at the Town Planning Department or the Town Library.

Introduction

STUDY AREA

The diagram illustrates the extent of the downtown study area for this plan. In general, it extends from Blossom Hill Road at the north to Wood Road at the south, and from Los Gatos Boulevard at the east to Glenridge Avenue at the west. Within this study area, special emphasis was given to the Town's Central Business District (CBD) with its core along Santa Cruz Avenue, between Saratoga and Main Street. While this area was emphasized, the entire study area was included in the surveys, analyses and development of implementation tools contained in this Plan.

5/18/82



INTENT

This plan is intended to resolve the various issues that have been identified in the downtown area in a systematic and comprehensive way so that the solutions do not themselves become new problems.

The issues listed in each section are not exhaustive but have been included to show the basis of concerns which have led to the goals and policies.

The plan has been divided into 7 subject areas and plan objectives have been identified for each as follows:

I. Conforming Status

Objective:

To resolve problems of the status of current non-conforming uses.

II. Land Use

Objectives:

1. To preserve the architectural and social character of downtown Los Gatos.
2. To preserve the viability of downtown businesses.
3. To encourage businesses which provide goods and services to Los Gatos residents.

III. Housing

Objectives:

1. To preserve the character of the downtown residential neighborhoods.
2. To limit the conversion of downtown houses to commercial uses.
3. To preserve the stock of older housing in the downtown area.
4. To allow for multiple tenant usage of older houses within strict controls.
5. To allow multiple housing units to develop on vacant residential sites in the downtown area within strict controls.

6. To encourage housing for senior citizens in the downtown area.

7. To provide for the development of new affordable housing within the downtown consistent with the existing neighborhood character and the physical site characteristics.

8. To maintain a stock of rental housing.

IV. Parking

Objective:

To resolve downtown parking problems for both residents and businesses.

V. Circulation & Transportation

Objectives:

1. To improve downtown traffic circulation.
2. To provide alternative transportation modes, public and private.
3. To reduce the effect of downtown traffic on commercial and nearby residential areas.

VI. Community Design

Objectives:

1. To enhance the particular Los Gatos identity.
2. To maintain the pedestrian scale.
3. To preserve historic buildings.

VII. Infrastructure and Utilities

Objective:

To insure adequate infrastructure and utilities in the downtown.



I Non-conforming Status

I. NON-CONFORMING STATUS

ISSUES

1. Current zoning makes it almost impossible for existing buildings destroyed by fire or other causes to be rebuilt in a manner which is economically feasible.
2. Many downtown businesses are currently non-conforming in terms of parking requirements and will be forced to terminate business if this issue is not resolved.

GOAL

To provide the means for existing buildings and uses to be in conformity with the policies and ordinances in effect once the Downtown Specific Plan is adopted and implemented.

POLICY

1. The non-conforming status of downtown uses due to the lack of adequate parking shall be removed contingent upon the owners' continuing participation in the implementation of the downtown parking program.
2. No change shall be made in the status of non-conforming uses which are no longer allowed under current zoning.
3. No change shall be made in the status of non-conforming uses due to the lack of a conditional use permit required by Town ordinance.
4. Buildings which are non-conforming as to type will be conforming if they are substantially remodeled to conform with community design and in keeping with the appearance of other commercial buildings in the downtown. (See Section VI)
5. Those existing commercial buildings within the downtown area which are currently non-conforming as to setback will become conforming upon adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan. Except for historically designated structures, any additions or reconstruction of existing buildings and all new buildings must be in compliance with adopted setback requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION

A. Non-Conforming Due to Parking

The actions to be taken to implement policy 1 above are the following:

1. Zoning ordinances shall be changed to reflect the parking standards adopted as a part of this Plan (see Recommended Standards in Section IV, Parking).
2. Parking standards can be met on-site or through the consolidated parking improvement program mandated by this Plan (Section IV, Parking).
3. For existing buildings and uses downtown:

The current non-conforming status will be removed if: (a) the implementation of the adopted downtown parking program is underway for the area (see Section IV for definition of area) within which a given parcel is located and the applicable payment and/or other obligations have been met or are committed in a long term program and/or (b) the owner independently provides the required parking.

4. In the consolidated parking program, priority shall be given to the construction of parking spaces to meet existing parking deficits.
5. Responsibility for refining the procedures to be followed in resolving current non-conforming status, for monitoring on-going efforts, and for determining when goals have been met shall be among the functions of the administrative body implementing the downtown parking program.

B. Non-Conforming Due to Building Type

To implement policy 4 above, the Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to state that non-conforming buildings as to type can be conforming if substantially remodeled to conform with community design and to keep with the appearance of other commercial buildings in the downtown.

C. Non-Conforming Due to Setback

To implement policy 5 above, the Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to exempt existing buildings from setback requirements and to state that adopted setback requirements should apply only to new buildings, additions and reconstruction, excepting historic structures.

II Land Use

II. LAND USE

ISSUES

1. Increases in commercial activity downtown are forecast to occur in existing commercial space, largely independent of public land use policies.
2. Land use policy will affect the amount of new commercial space added downtown and the amount of demand that shifts to non-downtown areas.
3. The need exists to evaluate the implications of development of vacant parcels downtown and of intensifications of uses on existing developed properties (e.g. service station sites).
4. Policy direction is needed regarding whether potential for commercial activity in existing residential areas can be realized or whether goals to preserve housing will take precedence.
5. There is potential for commercial development on the Meadow Gold property. This site has also been considered for additional parking.
6. The convenience/specialty retailing orientation of downtown retail activity is not likely to change significantly as a result of Town policy. Local decisions regarding individual use changes could affect the future mix of tenants, however.
7. There is concern over the loss of convenience and local service businesses and replacement by specialty or visitor-oriented shops.
8. Many feel that a better variety and choice in downtown shopping is needed.
9. For many, new businesses have seemed to change the scale and character of the downtown.
10. There is concern that there are too many bars and restaurants in the CBD and that these are changing the image and character of the downtown.
11. Some means are required to increase the definition of the downtown area and of the CBD.
12. The need exists to relate future downtown development decisions to the carrying capacity of downtown streets and the availability of parking facilities.

5/18/82

II-1

13. Toward the end of the 1980s, market trends will enhance potentials for office development in the existing service commercial areas located between Santa Cruz Avenue and University Avenue, north of Andrews Street. There are few alternative locations in Los Gatos for many of these types of service businesses.
14. It is recognized that commercial activity downtown provides tax base for the Town and employment for residents.
15. There has been considerable concern in the Town over conversion of residential buildings to commercial use.

GOAL

To maintain downtown Los Gatos as the dominant center of the Town with goods and services for local residents, while maintaining the existing town identity, environment, and commercial viability.

POLICIES

1. Commercial activity in downtown Los Gatos shall be encouraged in existing commercial areas and prohibited from existing residential areas.
2. Strong boundaries between the CBD and adjacent residential neighborhoods shall be established and maintained.
3. Existing commercial uses shall be recognized.
4. New commercial activities shall meet community acceptable standards concerning traffic, parking, and design. New commercial activity includes:
 - o Development on existing vacant parcels,
 - o Redevelopment or intensification (additional development) of use on existing developed properties,
 - o Expansion of existing buildings, and
 - o Reconstruction of existing buildings which are destroyed.
5. The different functions, land use patterns, and use mixes of commercial areas within the downtown shall be recognized and encouraged. This includes:
 - o The pedestrian scale, specialty shopping orientation of the CBD.

5/18/82

II-2

- o The convenience shopping land use pattern of areas north of Saratoga Avenue to about Andrews, and
- o The service commercial activities along Santa Cruz and University Avenues between Andrews, Roberts, and Blossom Hill.

6. Due to the existing physical constraints of downtown streets (i.e. the inability to widen the two lane roads) future intensification of use and new developments shall be keyed to the traffic carrying capacities of the streets and intersections in the Downtown. The traffic in the downtown area has reached a level so that little more can be tolerated without some improvements in the street capacity. The alternatives for changes in the street capacity are limited, consequently the potential for further development is also limited.
7. Conversion of residential structures to commercial shall be prohibited.
8. Vacant parcels will be allowed to develop consistent with the land use designation shown in this plan and subsequent zoning.
9. Mixed uses to encourage residential opportunities in commercial zones shall be encouraged.
10. If the traffic capacities are improved, additional housing shall have priority over additional commercial or office developments.
11. Existing residential uses will be recognized.
12. The existing open space in public use areas (e.g. Los Gatos Creek Trail, Town Center, Pageant Grounds and the High School turf areas and playing fields) shall be preserved.
13. Because of the traffic and public safety problems, no new bars and/or restaurants shall be approved unless they can demonstrate that they do not impact either problem.
14. Any new deck constructed over the Old Town depressed parking lot may not be used for commercial purposes.

IMPLEMENTATION

To meet land use goals and objectives and to carry out the policies stated above, implementation actions should be undertaken to:

- o Define boundaries for commercial activity in downtown Los Gatos and change zoning accordingly;

- o Define different functional areas for downtown commercial activity and change zoning as needed to encourage or discourage certain land use patterns and uses; and
- o Incorporate into the zoning ordinance the standards adopted in this plan regarding parking, traffic, and community design.

A. Commercial Area Boundaries

Changes in the boundaries of commercially zoned areas shall be made to better define and separate commercial and residential uses. The land use plan in Figure II-1 provides a generalized description of future land use designations. Figure II-2 shows the recommended zone changes that would implement the policies of the land use plan.

Areas which are largely commercial already shall remain zoned commercial and zoning in adjacent areas shall be changed to residential. Ordinance amendments shall be adopted to preserve existing commercial uses that may be isolated in residentially zoned areas so as to avoid future non-conforming status.

B. Commercial Sub-Areas Within the Downtown

There are three commercial sub-areas which should be differentiated. These are described below in terms of the character and function of the areas and of the recommended changes in zoning. Residential land uses and zoning are addressed separately in the housing section (see Section III, Housing).

1. Los Gatos Central Business District (CBD)

A revised C-2 zone is recommended for the CBD area of downtown Los Gatos. This includes the downtown commercial areas south of Saratoga Avenue and west of Church Street. This area has a predominantly retail orientation, is developed intensively at a pedestrian scale, and has many of the Town's oldest commercial buildings.

The C-2 zone shall recognize and encourage the preservation of the unique functions and character of the downtown. The C-2 zone would include the following items:

- a. The C-2 zone shall have the same boundaries as the consolidated CBD parking program.

- b. The CBD parking standards recommended in this plan (see Section V, Parking) would be incorporated into the zoning ordinance for this area.
- c. The community design standards and review procedures in this plan (see Section VI, Community Design) shall be incorporated into the zoning ordinance for this area. These would include the urban design standards for lighting, signs, street furniture, plant materials, facade design, and building materials.
- d. The new C-2 zone shall include the same permitted and conditional uses in the existing C-2 zone, and shall include residential uses among those permitted within the zone.
- e. As traffic capacity standards are adopted, they shall be incorporated into the zoning ordinance for this area.

2. Downtown Service Commercial Area

Service-Commercial is defined as service businesses necessary for the conduct of households or businesses, such as auto repair, building materials sales, paint suppliers, janitorial services, towing businesses, contractors offices and yards, laundry and dry cleaners, etc. as well as wholesaling and warehousing activities.

To encourage the retention of service commercial uses within the downtown area, the zoning shall be changed from C-2 to LM for the area on both sides of Santa Cruz from Andrews to Blossom Hill. Uses in the LM zone should be limited to service commercial and related uses and other commercial uses like office shall be prohibited, however existing uses shall be recognized.

3. Remaining Commercial Areas Downtown

Outside of the CBD and the service commercial area described above, the remaining commercial areas downtown are located along Santa Cruz Avenue north of Saratoga and along East Main Street, east of Church Street. These areas shall be zoned for neighborhood-commercial use and shall provide for parking standards recommended in this plan. (See Section IV, Parking)

C. University Avenue

- 1. Consider rezoning existing office uses on University Avenue between Mullen and Saratoga from C-2 to O (Office).
- 2. Rezone the remainder of University Avenue between Mullen and Saratoga from C-2 to R-1D.

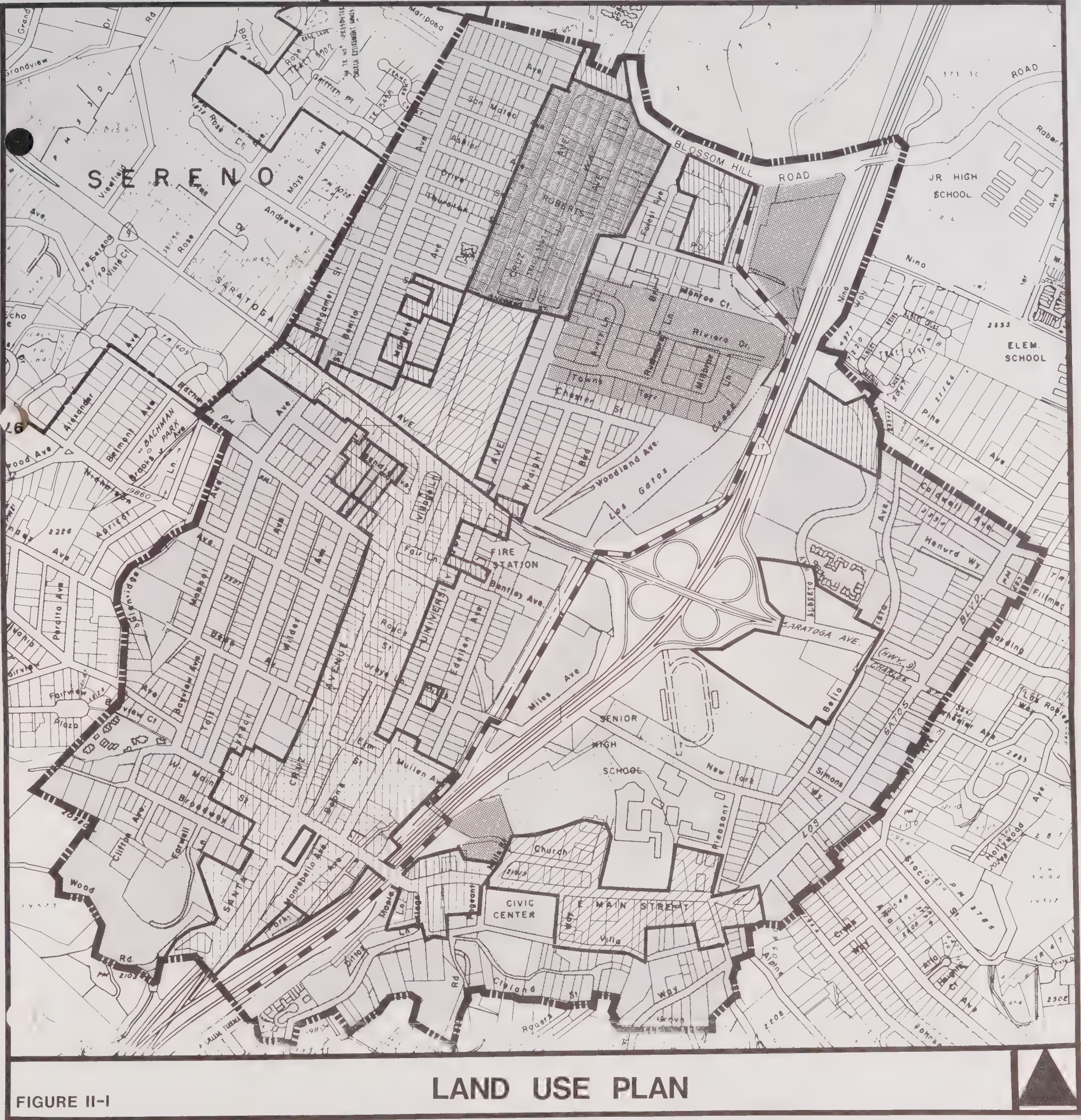
D. Open Space

- 1. The open space areas such as the High School playing fields, Balzer Field, the Town Plaza, the turf areas in front of the Civic Center and High School, the former Pageant grounds and the Youth Park should be designated as open space on the Land Use Map (fig. II-1).
- 3. Rezone the Town Plaza, Balzer Field, the Youth Park and the former Pageant grounds to RC.










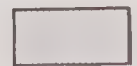
E. Downtown Residential Areas

- 1. Amend the R-1D zone to allow existing mortuaries with a conditional use permit.

Specific Plan



LEGEND:

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|---|---------------------------|
|  | LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL |  | NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL |
|  | MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL |  | HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL |
|  | HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL |  | CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT |
|  | OPEN SPACE |  | COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL |
|  | OFFICE PROFESSIONAL |  | PUBLIC |

SCALE 0 400 800 1200 1600

FEET

10/25/82 TOWN COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1982 - 197

Specific Plan



FIGURE II-2

RECOMMENDED ZONE CHANGES

LEGEND:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| R-1:8 (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL 8,000 SQ.FT.) | C-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL) |
| R-1:20 (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL 20,000 SQ. FT.) | O (OFFICE) |
| R-1D (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DOWNTOWN) | LM (COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL) |
| RM:5-12 (MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) | RC (RESOURCE CONSERVATION) |

SCALE 0 400 800 1200 1600

FEET

III Housing

III. HOUSING

ISSUES

1. Conversion of Residential Structures to Non-residential Uses.
 - a. University Avenue
 - b. Monterey Avenue
 - c. Bachman and Alameda Streets
2. Affordable housing is needed for senior citizens in the downtown area.
3. High density housing in the downtown area may be appropriate.
4. Rental housing should be preserved.

GOALS

1. To encourage new affordable housing opportunities (especially for senior citizens) within the downtown area in a manner that preserves the existing character and environment of downtown residential neighborhoods.
2. To preserve and protect the integrity and character of downtown residential neighborhoods.

POLICIES

1. No further conversion of residential uses to commercial use shall be allowed in predominantly residential areas.
2. Existing residential uses in the downtown area which provide affordable housing shall be preserved.
3. Appropriate mechanisms shall be provided for the development of new affordable housing within downtown residential neighborhoods consistent with existing neighborhood character, use and design, and with the local environment.
4. Multiple residential stock located in the downtown shall be maintained.
5. Maintain the rental stock in the downtown.
6. Mixed uses to encourage residential opportunities in commercial zones shall be encouraged.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Inventories of existing housing in downtown residential neighborhoods shall be done on an on-going basis to assess whether or not the stock of older downtown homes is being maintained.
2. Traditional planning density, coverage, height, etc. and other standards can be designated for vacant downtown lots to ensure that new multiple family housing on these sites will not disturb the local neighborhood environment.
3. Rezone vacant parcels in downtown residential areas for appropriate multi-family housing keeping intensification of use within the limits necessitated by the traffic carrying capacity of the streets and intersections in the downtown.
4. Rezone residential uses adjacent to commercial areas to encourage preservation of existing housing.
5. Develop incentive programs (e.g. density bonuses, height bonuses, coverage, etc.) for new housing on the two large vacant residential sites to encourage the development of a certain percentage of low/moderate income units compatible with the local residential neighborhood environment.
6. Explore adaptive reuse regulations that permit older historic buildings in the CBD to be rehabilitated for affordable housing within strict architectural and environmental controls.
7. Where necessary, revise Town building standards to ensure that new downtown housing (including affordable housing and housing for seniors) is compatible with adjacent residential areas and so that this housing does not, in itself, create issues in downtown neighborhoods.
8. Commercial zones in the downtown shall permit mixed residential and commercial uses.

IV Parking

IV. PARKING

ISSUES

1. The impact of downtown parking (particularly employee parking) on nearby residential areas is significant.
2. Evening patrons to downtown bars and restaurants park on nearby streets and create noise problems for residents.
3. There is currently a deficit of parking for existing commercial activity downtown.
4. Increased commercial activity downtown will increase parking needs.
5. Solutions are needed to meet downtown parking needs.
6. There are differing parking needs for downtown users (e.g. shoppers, employees, and residents).
7. The need exists to relate future downtown development to the availability of parking facilities.
8. Potentials exist to further develop the existing Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way to meet parking needs.
9. Existing vacant downtown properties offer parking opportunities.
10. Overall potentials to add parking in the CBD without destroying existing uses, however, are limited.
11. There is concern that parking structures not change the character and image of the downtown area.

GOAL

To improve existing downtown parking for residents, visitors, merchants, and employees, and reduce parking impacts on nearby residential areas.

POLICIES

1. A consolidated parking program shall be established within the CBD area of the downtown. A similar approach shall be considered for other areas of the downtown.
2. A funding and management plan for a CBD parking program shall be created.
3. The parking management plan shall consider the differing parking needs for daytime and nighttime uses.

5/18/82

IV-1

4. Joint-use of parking facilities shall be pursued to the maximum extent possible.
5. Parking ratios shall recognize potentials for multiple use of facilities (e.g. multiple purpose trips downtown and differences in hours of operation).
6. A time-staged strategy shall be followed in developing parking improvements in accordance with current and future needs.
7. Parking facilities shall be located conveniently to retail activities to the extent possible.
8. To the extent possible, parking facilities shall be located in relation to the primary approach direction of users in order to minimize internal circulation within the CBD.
9. Parking structures may be acceptable in downtown Los Gatos with no more than two levels and with the surface of the top level starting no more than four feet above grade.
10. The existing parking lot behind Mountain Charley's shall not be decked for parking.
11. Adequate design criteria shall be established to ensure parking facilities which are aesthetically pleasing, well designed for parking maneuverability, properly signed for ease of use, and properly located to attract traffic as it approaches the downtown.
12. A parking management plan shall be developed to include incentives and disincentives for appropriate employee parking including parking credits for the use of public transit and/or ridesharing.
13. Appropriate parking controls, coordinated with additional parking improvements, shall be implemented to protect downtown residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of downtown shoppers and employees.
14. Provision shall be made for bicycle parking in the downtown area.
15. In order to increase the yield of parking spaces in Town lots, there should be a study leading to ordinance amendments to adopt a ratio of compact car spaces.
16. The "build-out" allowed under current regulations governing properties located in parking assessment districts is not acceptable and must be reduced.

5/18/82

IV-2

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the recommended downtown parking program is presented in five parts:

- A. Parking Standards.
- B. CBD Parking Program.
- C. Parking Program for Other Commercial Areas.
- D. Neighborhood Parking Program.
- E. Bicycle Parking Program.

Each of these programs is discussed in the sub-sections which follow.

A. Parking Standards.

1. The zoning ordinance shall be amended to include the following parking standards for the downtown area:

Retail Uses:	One Parking Space per 300 square feet
Offices/Services:	One Parking Space per 250 square feet
Restaurant:	One Parking Space per
(No separate bar)	4 seats
Restaurant:	One Parking Space per
(Separate bar)	3 seats
Bar:	One Parking Space per 3 seats

2. Parking standards for downtown commercial areas within the CBD are recommended to be:

80% of the parking spaces calculated using the ratios above except for bars and restaurants with separate bars. Said activities must comply with the standard parking requirement.

The factor of 80% percent is included to account for the multiple use characteristics of parking within the CBD given the land use pattern and the proposed consolidated CBD parking program.

B. CBD Parking Program

1. A single unified CBD parking district shall be formed, with the same boundaries as the CBD as defined in this Plan and membership in that Parking District shall be required for removal of non-conforming use due to parking.
2. The parking requirements for each business in the CBD area will be computed using the Parking Standards above.

3. Based on the recommendation of the Parking Committee (dated August 17, 1982) a CBD parking authority shall be formed. The Town Council will be this authority and shall:

- a. Allocate current public parking to the existing businesses in the CBD, giving them credits:
 - (1) for their pro-rated share of the total existing CBD parking.
 - (2) for on-site parking.
 - (3) for those who have been in a parking program in the past.
- b. Promote the formation of an assessment district and/or consider the use of the various parking and business improvement programs authorized by State law to help finance the construction of the parking facilities.
- c. Develop a funding formula for those who are found with a deficit between requirements and credits. The funding formula will be delineated in the petition and voted upon when the funding district is formed.
- d. Develop a revenue collection plan. Revenues collected (fines, fees, meters and permits) will accrue to the district to help pay off the bonds, for maintenance, enforcement, capital replacement and parking alternatives, or programs to maximize use of parking facilities such as shuttle buses, more employee lots, bicycles, bus passes, etc.
- e. Develop a phased plan for implementing all or some of the parking facilities listed in Section f. below.
- f. Consider the following alternatives for constructing additional parking facilities:
 - (1) Surface Lot: Grays Lane - Royce Street
 - (2) Double deck: Elm Street - Grays Lane
 - (3) Surface Lot: Park Avenue (including G.T.E. and Farwell Properties)
 - (4) Old Town Lot: Acquire air rights or entire property
 - (5) Double deck: Bachman Avenue - Saratoga Avenue

(Amended by Resolution 1983-228, 11-7-83)

(6) The vacant property at the northeast corner of College Avenue and Villa Avenue.

(7) Other alternatives for which the cost/space is equivalent to those of (1) through (6) and which are consistent with the other items in Section IV (Parking) of the Downtown Specific Plan.

g. In identifying potential improvements that could increase the number of parking spaces within the CBD, the following shall be considered:

(1) Make the best use of existing Town-owned property.

(2) Parking should not replace existing development.

(3) Parking structures with two levels are acceptable only as specified in Policy #9 in Section IV.

(4) The existing lot behind Mountain Charley's should not be decked for parking.

(5) The Old Town parking lot can be decked for parking but not for commercial use.

h. In support of the parking program, the Town shall:

(1) Donate Town-owned land for parking.

(2) Provide staff support for administrating the parking program.

4. Limit to 60% (F.A.R. .6) the amount of floor area permitted on the properties within the unified CBD parking district. The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to include a floor area ratio (F.A.R.) of .6 for the C-2 zone.

In the event a building or buildings within the CBD is/are destroyed, reconstruction to the prior floor area would be allowed.

(Amended by Resolution 1983-228, 11-7-83)

C. Parking Program for Other Commercial Areas

For the commercial areas of the downtown outside of the CBD parking shall be provided on-site, or in a pooled area for a small number of uses (like a small complex of stores). The parking requirements for these areas are given above.

Solutions to the problems of existing parking deficits and possible hardship cases for new development include:

- o Use of existing off-site public parking in the area to provide for parking deficiencies, possibly in return for in-lieu fees or a long-term lease arrangement.
- o The construction of a joint-use facility for several sites.
- o Parking time limits.
- o Modification of parking requirements in cases with major difficulties in providing parking.
- o Inclusion in CBD parking program for sites in close proximity to the CBD.

D. Neighborhood Parking Program

A residential permit parking program on streets adjacent to the CBD shall be considered to reduce the impact of downtown parking on nearby residential areas. Several variations of a residential parking permit program are possible. Some of the alternatives are:

- o Non-residents are prohibited from parking during certain hours of the day.
- o Non-residents are prohibited from parking both during the day and at night.
- o Non-residents are permitted to park for limited amounts of time in the regulated areas.

The selection of a specific program will depend on the desires of neighborhood residents and the Town Council will initiate programs on a trial basis for the streets listed below.

The specifics of the parking plan and the particular areas to be included will be subject to neighborhood input and public hearings.

- o Wilder Avenue between Bean Avenue and Bachman Avenue.
- o Bachman Avenue between Wilder Avenue and Massol Avenue.
- o Main Street from Lyndon Avenue to Bayview Avenue.
- o Edelen Avenue between Hullen Avenue and Bentley Avenue.
- o Broadway between Santa Cruz and West Main Street.
- o Tait Avenue between Bean Avenue and Almendra Avenue.

Other streets could be included or a CBD-wide program could be implemented.

The preferential parking program shall be coordinated with the CBD parking program, such that preferential parking will begin within twelve months of the adoption of this plan. One method for implementing a preferential parking program is given in the Technical Appendix.

E. Bicycle Parking Program

The policy to provide bicycle parking downtown can best be met by incorporating such facilities in downtown:

- o Parking lots;
- o Proposed transit terminal; and
- o Other public areas.

Bicycle parking facilities could include racks for parking in both outdoor and covered locations and the provision of lockers for longer-term parking at the transit terminal. Bicycle parking shall be given special consideration in the designing of new automobile parking facilities, the transit terminal, and pedestrian arcades or other public areas.

Bicycle parking should be located so as not to conflict with pedestrian movement.

V Circulation and Transportation

V. CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION

ISSUES

1. Traffic congestion currently exists in downtown Los Gatos. The arterials experiencing the most congestion are Saratoga Avenue, Santa Cruz Avenue and Main Street/Los Gatos Boulevard.
2. Significant growth in regional traffic could further aggravate congestion on downtown arterials. The addition of increased traffic from future increased activity downtown could also add to future traffic demands.
3. Some through traffic presently takes "short cuts" through downtown residential areas.
4. Downtown traffic impacts in nearby residential areas are creating safety, noise and congestion problems.
- High school traffic causes congestion during peak school traffic hours.
6. Saratoga Avenue is a "bottleneck" for access to the downtown.
7. The need exists to relate future downtown development decisions to the carrying capacity of downtown streets.
8. A downtown bus depot is needed.
9. Concern for the fiscal impact of constructing additional parking and transportation facilities vs. the fiscal impact of not constructing additional parking and transportation facilities.

GOAL

1. To improve traffic flow in the downtown and reduce the effect of downtown traffic on commercial and nearby residential areas.
2. To provide transportation alternatives.
3. To increase opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the downtown area.

POLICIES

1. Appropriate traffic controls shall be developed and implemented to protect downtown residential neighborhoods from the impacts of through traffic in terms of safety, speeding, noise, and other disturbances.

2. Signalization improvements to increase traffic flow shall be made at the intersections of Santa Cruz Avenue and Main Street, University Avenue and Main Street, Santa Cruz Avenue and Saratoga Avenue and University Avenue and Saratoga Avenue.
3. The use of alternative transportation modes (walking, bicycles, transit, "People Mover" or Shuttle System), in the downtown area shall be encouraged for environmental, energy-saving and circulation purposes.
4. A combined transit station and bus depot for all the various public transit modes in the downtown shall be developed. The specific site for this facility shall be determined after a suitable feasibility study is done by the Town.
5. A methodology shall be developed and a review procedure implemented for relating future downtown development decisions to the carrying capacity of downtown streets.
6. All circulation and transportation improvements shall take into consideration the fiscal implications to the Town for the construction, operation of such improvements and the enforcement of any associated regulations.

IMPLEMENTATION

The recommended implementation program is discussed in the following subsections under these topics:

- A. Traffic Diverters
- B. Traffic Improvements
- C. Traffic/Roadway Capacity Review
- D. Transit Terminal/Bus Station
- E. Bikeway System
- F. Other Public Transportation Facilities
- G. Incentives for Use of Public Transit

A. Traffic Diverters

Traffic diverters will be implemented as a means of reducing the amount of non-residential traffic utilizing residential streets as alternative routes to congested arterials. Any diverters shall be first installed on a trial basis including landscaping.

The initial installation will be along Tait and San Benito on a trial basis. The plans for the diverters will be reviewed to assure emergency access to the neighborhood.

For diverters in other locations, residents may petition for a public hearing to install diverters. As a result of the public hearing, the Town Council will decide whether or not to install temporary diverters and what type of diverters. A subsequent hearing shall be held by the Council to review diverters.

Alternate types of traffic diverters are shown on Figure V-1.

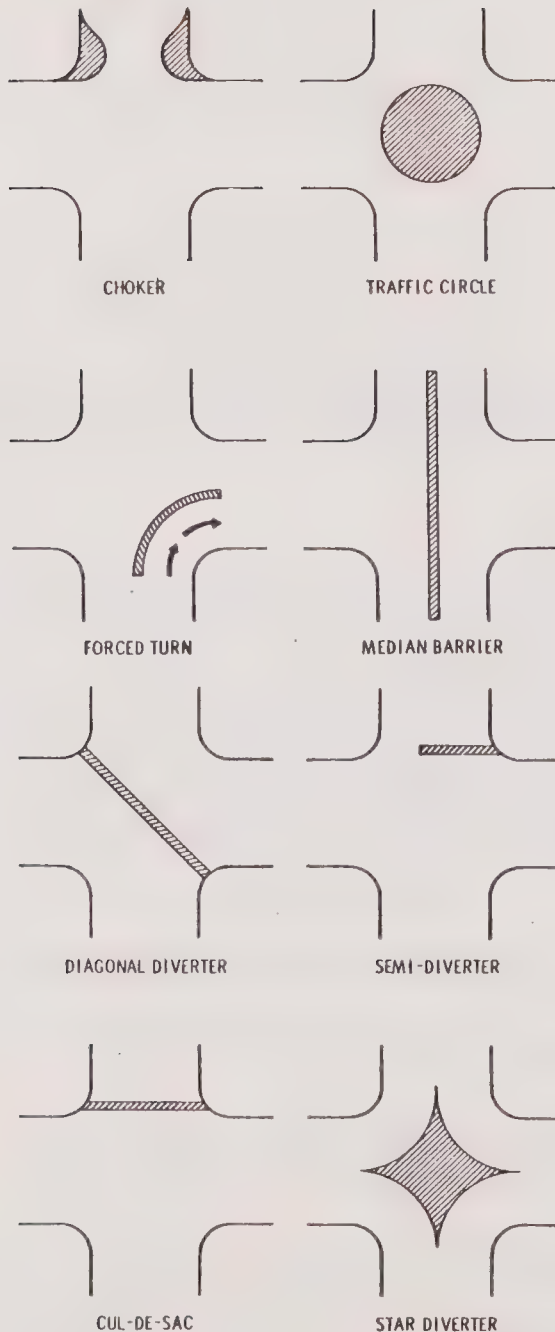


FIGURE V-1

EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE TRAFFIC DIVERTERS

B. Traffic Improvements

Traffic improvements within the downtown area are necessary to accommodate existing traffic as well as future increases. Among the improvements identified during the planning process, those to be implemented are:

- o Santa Cruz and Saratoga Avenue Intersection
Upgrade traffic signal control equipment, rechannelize this intersection to provide improved turning lanes, and install master coordination equipment to synchronize lights along Saratoga Avenue for maximum traffic flows. (Cal-Trans and the Town are jointly pursuing this project.)
- o Main Street at Santa Cruz Avenue and at University Avenue
 1. Upgrade traffic control equipment at these intersections and install interconnect control equipment.
 2. Eliminate crosswalk at Main and Montebello.
 3. Adjust the time sequence for northbound traffic on Santa Cruz Avenue to give maximum time for southbound traffic.
- o Saratoga Avenue
Widen the road to accommodate 2 lanes eastbound between Massol and Santa Cruz Avenue plus a right turn only lane at Santa Cruz and a wider two-way left turn lane.

C. Traffic/Roadway Capacity Review

1. Required Review:

Any project or development within the Town of Los Gatos that will add traffic to downtown roadways and critical intersections will be subject to review and approval by the Town.

Each request for review shall be analyzed and a determination made on: 1) the ability of critical roadways and major intersections to accommodate existing traffic; 2) increased traffic estimated for approved developments not yet occupied; and 3) regional traffic growth and traffic anticipated for the proposed project one year after occupancy. Objective standards for traffic capacities need to be developed prior to the institution of the Traffic/Roadway Capacity Review Program. These standards should then be extended to an estimate of maximum additional floor area to be built in the CBD. A proposed Traffic/Roadway Capacity Review system is listed in the Technical Appendix.

With assistance of staff, the Planning Commission shall adopt the standards for traffic capacities and maximum volumes for the key signalized intersections in the Downtown and specific roadways by January 1, 1983. All developers shall be required to show if their projects have any impacts on these critical roadways or intersections as follows:

The deciding body shall review the application for traffic roadway/intersection capacity and make one of the following determinations:

- (a) The project will not impact any of the critical roadways and intersections causing the roadways and/or intersections to exceed their available capacities.
- (b) The project will impact the critical roadways and intersections causing the capacity of the roadway and intersections to be exceeded.

Any project receiving Town determination (a) may proceed. Any project receiving only determination (b) shall not be approved.

D. Downtown Transit Terminal/Bus Station

In that the Los Gatos Community Services and Development Commission has studied the issue and location of a Downtown Bus Depot at length, and in that citizens are currently suffering great inconvenience due to lack of a bus depot, and in that commercial bus lines are prepared to shoulder financial and management responsibilities for such a facility, Los Gatos will approve location of a Downtown Bus Depot on the Town-owned lot, south of the Post Office, as an immediate solution to a problem which has existed for some time.

The Planning Department and Town Engineer will prepare a plan for a bus facility on the Meadow Gold site. All efforts shall be made to provide a combined facility to serve all the public and private transit systems and possibly even include automobile and bicycle parking.

E. Bikeway System

Future development and redevelopment projects shall be evaluated to ensure that they have no negative effects on the safety or convenience of bicycle use through the downtown. Furthermore, CBD parking improvements may provide for bicycle paths.

F. Other Public Transit Facilities

A potential downtown shuttle system shall be investigated to provide access to the major downtown activity centers.

G. Incentives for Use of Public Transit

The Town shall work with Santa Clara County Transit and commercial carriers to improve transit service to and from downtown Los Gatos and to increase ridership.

The actions taken to increase transit use shall be carefully monitored to judge their effectiveness.

Some guidelines for cooperative action with Santa Clara County Transit and commercial carriers appear in the Technical Appendix.

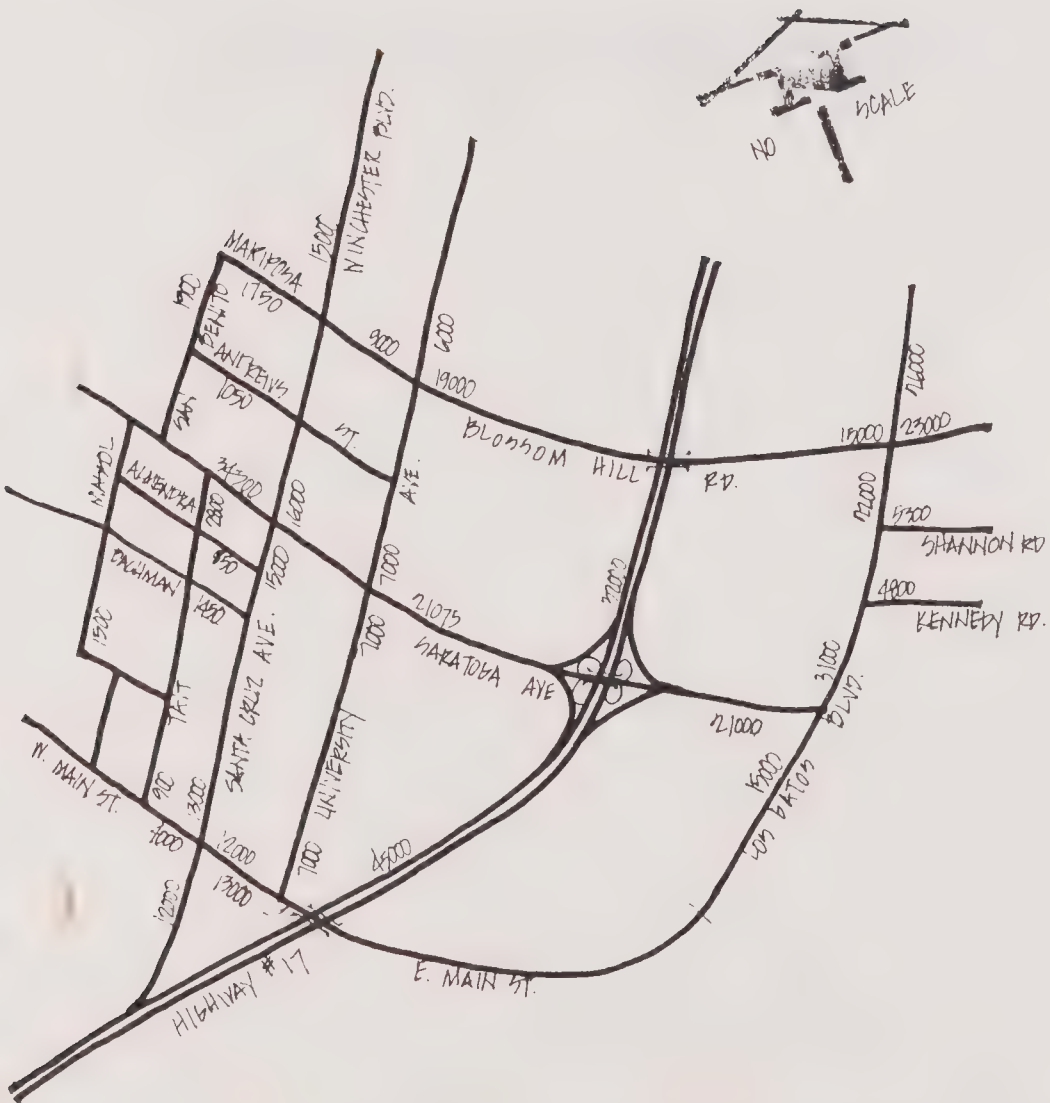


FIGURE V-2

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VI Community Design

VI. COMMUNITY DESIGN

ISSUES

1. Improvements are needed in the Town's downtown signing and graphics system.
2. It is important to maintain the Town's small-scale atmosphere and amenities.
3. It is important to maintain a variety of images in the downtown area.
4. Parking structures should have a low profile, be depressed and screened wherever possible.

GOAL

To preserve the character of downtown Los Gatos and the quality of life for its citizens.

POLICIES

1. Provide for a pedestrian-oriented downtown core.
2. Establish and maintain strong boundaries between the downtown commercial area and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
3. Preserve and enhance the appearance of the CBD through design improvements.
4. Strengthen architectural design controls related to the rehabilitation of buildings within the Town's CBD.
5. Pursue the provision of directional signs to identify the downtown area and to guide residents and visitors to downtown destinations.
6. Establish adequate design criteria to ensure parking facilities which are aesthetically pleasing.

Preserve historically, architecturally or socially significant buildings.

A. Community Design Standards

The Planning Commission shall develop specific Community Design Standards and the standards should consider the following:

Sub-Areas

1. Highway 9/Saratoga Avenue
2. Santa Cruz Avenue/Downtown
3. Almond Grove/Broadway
4. University/Edelen
5. Main Street
6. Los Gatos Boulevard
7. Santa Cruz/San Benito

Policies

1. Identify valuable and historical architectural styles and features and preserve and retain these for each sub-area.
2. Set height, bulk and set back limits.
3. Consider which colors, textures and materials would be incompatible.
4. Develop landscaping schemes which will highlight each sub-area.
5. Develop standards for streetscape (furniture, sidewalks, streetlights, crosswalks, etc.).
6. Specify designs that encourage the pedestrian environment.
7. Develop standards for the rehabilitation of rear facades.

Implementation

1. The Los Gatos Heritage Preservation Committee be requested to recommend additional historic districts. The following neighborhoods should be considered prime prospects: University/Edelen, Los Gatos Blvd., and Glenridge.
2. Retain existing height limits set by the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Redevelopment shall preserve older architecturally valuable structures unless it is unfeasible. In matters of dispute the advice of the Los Gatos Heritage Preservation Committee should be sought.
4. Department of Parks and Forestry shall develop a comprehensive landscape and streetscape plan for each sub-area.

B. Community Design Concept

The Land Use Section recommends that the core or Central Business District (CBD) of the downtown area be planned and zoned as a separate district to meet the goal to preserve the character of the downtown, and the objective to enhance the identity and appearance of the downtown.

C. Commercial Core

The area along Santa Cruz and University Avenues between Saratoga Avenue and West Main Street should receive special treatment to accent it as the Town's commercial core or CBD. This treatment to enhance user comprehension and enjoyment of this area should include:

1. Continuation of the Town's downtown paving and tree planting system within the CBD.
2. Specialized lighting and sign systems to distinguish this area.
3. Architectural design controls related to the rehabilitation of buildings within the CBD through consistency and compatibility of scale, massing, materials, color, texture, reflectivity, openings, and other details.
4. Design controls on private signs to enhance the commercial core area.
5. Controls to ensure that the new buildings built on existing vacant parcels strengthen the form and image of the CBD.
6. Orientation signs to guide those seeking access to the Town's parking areas.
7. Modifications and improvements to the Town Plaza to heighten its role as the southern visual anchor to the downtown area.

D. Solar Access

The zoning regulations shall be examined to see whether amendments are necessary to permit solar access in the downtown.

E. Building Relationship to Street and Pedestrian Ways

Mid-block pedestrian arcades linking Santa Cruz Avenue with existing and new parking facilities in the CBD along the right-of-way may greatly add to the pedestrian environment to facilitate pedestrian access. These arcades must include crime prevention elements such as good sightlines and lighting systems for security. Arcades and passageways may be provided on currently vacant sites or as a part of reconstruction in the event of a disaster.

F. Parking

Parking both on and off street should be softened or made as inconspicuous as possible through landscaping, berms, screening and the like.

G. Lighting

Street walkway, and building lighting should be designed so as to strengthen and reinforce the Town's downtown structure.

H. Signs

Public signs, directional signs, informational signs and others within the CBD should be so designed as to easily communicate their messages, and to be so distinct in their form and color that the observer will identify them with the Central Business District.

I. Street Furniture

Street furniture and equipment, such as lamp standards, traffic signals, fire hydrants, street signs, telephones, mail boxes, refuse receptacles, bus shelters, drinking fountains, planters, kiosks, flag poles and other elements of the street environment should be designated and selected so as to strengthen and reinforce the downtown structure.

J. Building Materials

The exterior building materials in the CBD should be consistent with those used in existing, tastefully-executed buildings in near proximity.

K. Plant Materials

Street trees should be selected to heighten user understanding of the Downtown and its CBD. Trees and plants shall be approved by the Superintendent of Parks and Forestry for the purpose of meeting criteria, including climatic conditions, maintenance, year round versus seasonal color change (blossoms, summer foliage, autumn color), special branching effects and other considerations.

VII Infrastructure and Utilities

VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

ISSUE

1. There is concern about whether infrastructure (water, sewer, solid waste, utilities) is adequate to serve the increased activity allowed under this Plan.
2. There is concern that the below-grade parking structures might affect drainage in the downtown area.

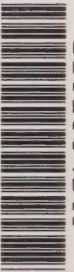
RESOLUTION

The downtown area will be less intensively developed under this Plan than under existing Town policy. As a result, this Plan does not increase the need for infrastructure and utilities.

Discussions with Town staff and work done as a part of the General Plan indicate that there are no major capacity constraints for providing water, sewer, solid waste, and utilities to the downtown area. Roadway and parking capacities present major issues, however, and these are addressed in other sections of this Plan (see Section IV - Parking, and Section V - Circulation and Transportation).

It is unlikely that the construction of below grade parking structures will affect drainage downtown. Preliminary review by Town staff and the consultants indicate that the structures will not go deep enough to affect drainage. Further analysis as a part of project engineering and design will consider drainage for each facility to assure that construction will not create problems.

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



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